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# EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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## FAMILIES FIRST EMPLOYMENT AND CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN THE EAST, NORTHEAST AND SOUTHEAST REGIONS OF TENNESSEE: A TWO-GENERATION APPROACH

Proposal for GFA # 34530-45720

Submitted by:  
Center for Community Outreach  
East Tennessee State University  
PO Box 70254  
Johnson City TN 37614

## STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

The proposer must sign and complete the Statement of Certifications and Assurances below as required, and it must be included in the proposer's proposal.

The proposer does, hereby, expressly affirm, declare, confirm, certify, and assure ALL of the following:

1. The proposer will comply with all of the provisions and requirements of the Grant Funding Announcement.
2. If selected, the proposer will provide all services as defined in the Scope of the Grant Funding Announcement Attachment A, *Pro Forma* Grant Contract for the total Grant Contract Term.
3. The proposer accepts and agrees to all terms and conditions set out in the Grant Funding Announcement Attachment A., *Pro Forma* Grant Contract.
4. The proposer acknowledges and agrees that a grant contract resulting from the Grant Funding Announcement shall incorporate, by reference, all proposal responses as a part of the Contract.
5. The proposer will comply with:
  - (a) the laws of the State of Tennessee;
  - (b) Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964;
  - (c) Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972;
  - (d) the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the regulations issued there under by the federal government; and,
  - (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations issued there under by the federal government.
6. To the knowledge of the undersigned, the information detailed within the proposal submitted to this Grant Funding Announcement is accurate.
7. The proposal submitted in response to this Grant Funding Announcement was independently prepared, without collusion, under penalty of perjury.
8. No amount shall be paid directly or indirectly to an employee or official of the State of Tennessee as wages, compensation, or gifts in exchange for acting as an officer, agent, employee, subcontractor, or consultant to the proposer in connection with this Grant Funding Announcement or any resulting grant contract.
9. The proposal submitted in response to this Grant Funding Announcement shall remain valid for at least 120 days subsequent to the Response Deadline established in Section 5 of the Grant Funding Announcement and thereafter in accordance with any grant contract pursuant to the Grant Funding Announcement.
10. The proposer affirms the following statement, as required by the Iran Divestment Act Tenn. Code Ann. § 12-12-111: "By submission of this bid, each bidder and each person signing on behalf of any bidder certifies, and in the case of a joint bid each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, under penalty of perjury, that to the best of its knowledge and belief that each bidder is not on the list created pursuant to §12-12-106." For reference purposes, the list is currently available online at:  
<https://www.tn.gov/generalservices/procurement/central-procurement-office-cpo-/library-/public-information-library.html>.

By signing this Statement of Certifications and Assurances, below, the signatory also certifies legal authority to bind the proposing entity to the provisions of this Grant Funding Announcement and any grant contract awarded pursuant to it. If the signatory is not the proposer (if an individual) or the proposer's corporate *President or Chief Executive Officer*, this document must attach evidence showing the individual's authority to bind the proposer.

**DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT IF YOU ARE NOT LEGALLY AUTHORIZED TO BIND THE PROPOSER**

SIGNATURE:

William R. Duncan

PRINTED NAME & TITLE:

William R. Duncan, Vice Provost for Research

DATE:

4-23-19

PROPOSER LEGAL ENTITY

NAME:

East Tennessee State University

## EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

### Delegation of Signature Authority on Sponsored and Research-Related Agreements

Effective August 1, 2008 East Tennessee State University's chief research officer (the Vice Provost for Research), shall have the authority to sign and thereby legally obligate the University on any agreement that either commits external support for, or is derived from, an approved University sponsored program. These agreements shall include but are not limited to:

- Grant Agreements
- Clinical Trial Agreements
- Contracts
- Sub-award Agreements

In addition, the Vice Provost for Research shall have the authority to sign other research-related agreements including:

- Material Transfer Agreements
- Non-Disclosure Agreements
- Confidentiality Agreements
- Memoranda of Understanding

If the Vice Provost for Research is unavailable for signature the Director of Sponsored Programs shall have the authority to sign the Vice Provost's name accompanied by their initials. This delegation does not remove the authority of the Vice Presidents to sign such agreements.



Dr. Paul E. Stanton, Jr.  
President, East Tennessee State University



Date

## GRANT FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT ATTACHMENT D.1

### TECHNICAL RESPONSE & EVALUATION GUIDE

**SECTION A: PASS/FAIL ITEMS.** The Respondent must address all items detailed below and provide, in sequence, the information and documentation as required (referenced with the associated item references). The Respondent must also detail the response page number for each item in the appropriate space below.

The Solicitation Coordinator will review the response to determine if the Mandatory Requirement Items are addressed as required and mark each with pass or fail. For each item that is not addressed as required, the Proposal Evaluation Team must review the response and attach a written determination. In addition to the Mandatory Requirement Items, the Solicitation Coordinator will review each response for compliance with all RFP requirements.

<b>PROPOSER LEGAL ENTITY NAME:</b>		East Tennessee State University	
Response Page # (Proposer completes)	Item Ref.	Section A— Mandatory Requirement Items	Pass/Fail
		The proposal must be delivered to the State no later than the Response Deadline specified in Grant Funding Announcement Section 5, Schedule of Events.	
		The proposal must NOT contain any restrictions of the rights of the State or other qualification of the response.	
		A proposal must NOT submit alternate responses.	
1	A.1.	Provide the Statement of Certifications and Assurances (Grant Funding Announcement Attachment C) completed and signed by an individual empowered to bind the proposer to the provisions of this Grant Funding Announcement and any resulting grant contract. The Statement of Certifications and Assurances must be signed without exception or qualification.	
1	A.2.	Provide a statement, based upon reasonable inquiry, of whether the proposer or any individual who shall cause to deliver goods or perform services under the grant contract has a possible conflict of interest (e.g., employment by the State of Tennessee) and, if so, describe the nature of that conflict.  NOTE: Any questions of conflict of interest shall be solely within the discretion of the State, and the State reserves the right to cancel any award.	
<i>State Use – Grant Coordinator Signature, Printed Name &amp; Date:</i>			

## TECHNICAL RESPONSE &amp; EVALUATION GUIDE

**SECGENERAL QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE.** The Respondent must address all items detailed below and provide, in sequence, the information and documentation as required (referenced with the associated item references). The Respondent must also detail the response page number for each item in the appropriate space below. Proposal Evaluation Team members will independently evaluate and assign one score for all responses to Section B— General Qualifications & Experience Items found below.

<b>RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:</b>		East Tennessee State University
<b>Response Page #</b> (Respondent completes)	<b>Item Ref.</b>	<b>Section B— General Qualifications &amp; Experience Items</b>
1	B.1.	Detail the name, e-mail address, mailing address, telephone number, and facsimile number of the person the State should contact regarding the proposal.
2	B.2.	Describe the proposer's form of business ( <i>i.e.</i> , individual, sole proprietor, corporation, non-profit corporation, partnership, limited liability company) and business location (physical location or domicile).
2	B.3.	Detail the number of years the proposer has been in business.
2	B.4.	Briefly describe how long the proposer has been providing the goods or services required by this Grant Funding Announcement.
2	B.5.	Describe the proposer's number of employees, client base, and location of offices.
2	B.6.	Provide a statement of whether there have been any mergers, acquisitions, or change of control of the proposer within the last ten (10) years. If so, include an explanation providing relevant details.
2	B.7.	Provide a statement of whether the proposer or, to the proposer's knowledge, any of the proposer's employees, agents, independent contractors, or subcontractors, involved in the delivery of goods or performance of services on a contract pursuant to this Grant Funding Announcement, have been convicted of, pled guilty to, or pled <i>nolo contendere</i> to any felony. If so, include an explanation providing relevant details.
2	B.8.	Provide a statement of whether, in the last ten (10) years, the proposer has filed (or had filed against it) any bankruptcy or insolvency proceeding, whether voluntary or involuntary, or undergone the appointment of a receiver, trustee, or assignee for the benefit of creditors. If so, include an explanation providing relevant details.
2	B.9.	<p>Provide a statement of whether there is any material litigation pending against the proposer that the proposer should reasonably believe could adversely affect its ability to meet grant contract requirements pursuant to this Grant Funding Announcement or is likely to have a material adverse effect on the proposer's financial condition. If such exists, list each separately, explain the relevant details, and attach the opinion of counsel addressing whether and to what extent it would impair the proposer's performance in a grant contract pursuant to this Grant Funding Announcement.</p> <p>NOTE: All persons, agencies, firms, or other entities that provide legal opinions regarding the proposer must be properly licensed to render such opinions. The State may require the proposer to submit proof of license for each person or entity that renders such opinions.</p>

<b>RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:</b>		East Tennessee State University
<b>Response Page # (Respondent completes)</b>	<b>Item Ref.</b>	<b>Section B— General Qualifications &amp; Experience Items</b>
2	<b>B.10.</b>	<p>Provide a statement of whether there are any pending or in progress Securities Exchange Commission investigations involving the proposer. If such exists, list each separately, explain the relevant details, and attach the opinion of counsel addressing whether and to what extent it will impair the proposer's performance in a grant contract pursuant to this Grant Funding Announcement.</p> <p>NOTE: All persons, agencies, firms, or other entities that provide legal opinions regarding the proposer must be properly licensed to render such opinions. The State may require the proposer to submit proof of license for each person or entity that renders such opinions.</p>

## GRANT FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT ATTACHMENT D.3

### TECHNICAL RESPONSE & EVALUATION GUIDE

**TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE & APPROACH.** The proposer must address all items (below) and provide, in sequence, the information and documentation as required (referenced with the associated item references). The proposer must also detail the response page number for each item in the appropriate space below. A Proposal Evaluation Team, made up of three or more State employees, will independently evaluate and score the response to each item found below. Each evaluator will use the following whole number, raw point scale for scoring each item:

**0 = little value      1 = poor      2 = fair      3 = satisfactory      4 = good      5 = excellent**

The Grant Coordinator will multiply the Item Score by the associated Evaluation Factor (indicating the relative emphasis of the item in the overall evaluation). The resulting product will be the item's Raw Weighted Score for purposes of calculating the section score as indicated.

RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:		East Tennessee State University			
Response Page # (Respondent completes)	Item Ref.	Section C— Technical Qualifications, Experience & Approach Items	Item Score	Evaluation Factor	Raw Weighted Score
2	C.1.	Provide a narrative that illustrates the proposer's understanding of the State's requirements and project schedule.		1	
3	C.2.	Provide a narrative that illustrates how the proposer will complete the scope of services, accomplish required objectives, and meet the State's project schedule.		2	
7	C.3.	Provide a narrative that illustrates how the proposer will manage the project, ensure completion of the scope of services, and accomplish required objectives.		2	
9	C.4.	Provide a description of the proposer's experience at each of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessing an individual's job compatibility and connecting individuals on career paths that lead to sustainable income based on the labor market needs;</li> <li>2. Facilitating job search efforts for individuals that lead to employment; and</li> <li>3. Preparing individuals for entry and/or re-entry into the work place.</li> </ol>		3	
9	C.5.	Provide a description of the proposer's experience in assessing and providing job services to individuals that have limited or no proficiency in English.		2	
10	C.6.	Describe the proposer's approach to career coaching, detailing the types of job retention services the proposer will offer to populations that traditionally have had difficulty sustaining employment.		3	
11	C.7.	Describe the proposer's existing relationships with local American Job Centers, WoRC Readiness Component (WoRC) Operators, and other appropriate community partners that can connect individuals with employment		2	

<b>RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:</b>		East Tennessee State University			
<b>Response Page # (Respondent completes)</b>	<b>Item Ref.</b>	<b>Section C— Technical Qualifications, Experience &amp; Approach Items</b>	<b>Item Score</b>	<b>Evaluation Factor</b>	<b>Raw Weighted Score</b>
		opportunities.			
12	C.8.	Describe the proposer's existing relationships with vocational training programs, certificate programs, apprenticeship programs, or the like.		2	
12	C.9.	Describe the proposer's approach to identifying high demand fields offering increased wage opportunities and assisting individuals in aligning their skills and training with these fields to take maximum advantage of employment opportunities.		3	
13	C.10.	Describe proactive measures the proposer intends to implement to assist individuals to overcome barriers to employment such as mental or physical health challenges, history of substance abuse, criminal history, transportation difficulties, lack of work experience, etc. Discuss 1) the process by which individuals will request supportive services from the proposer to address such barriers, and 2) the proposer's process for requiring and tracking receipts for such supportive services.		3	
14	C.11.	Describe the proposer's quality assurance processes and related infrastructure. Explain the proposer's internal monitoring processes for financials, including case documentation. Describe the frequency of internal monitoring reviews and what strategies the proposer will apply to improving service delivery and utilization control.		2	
15	C.12.	Describe the proposer's approach to monitoring individuals' participation in core and/or non-core work activities.		2	
<i>The Solicitation Coordinator will use this sum and the formula below to calculate the section score. All calculations will use and result in numbers rounded to two (2) places to the right of the decimal point.</i>					<b>Total Raw Weighted Score:</b> <i>(sum of Raw Weighted Scores above)</i>
<b>Total Raw Weighted Score</b>					<b>= SCORE:</b>
<b>Maximum Possible Raw Weighted Score</b> <i>(i.e., 5 x the sum of item weights above)</i>					
<i>State Use – Evaluator Identification:</i>					
<i>State Use – Grant Coordinator Signature, Printed Name &amp; Date:</i>					



## SECTION A – MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

### **A.1. Transmittal and Statement of Certifications and Assurances.**

The Statement of Certifications and Assurances is located after the Title page.

### **A.2. Conflict of Interest.**

East Tennessee State University and the staff who will provide services via this proposal are not aware of any conflicts of interest between the Proposer and the State.

## SECTION B – GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

**Introduction.** Since the beginning of Families First, ETSU has operated employment and training services for Families First Clients in as many as 31 counties of East Tennessee. Currently, ETSU operates Families First in the 24 counties that constitute the Northeast and East regions.

a. **RESOURCES AND CAPACITY TO OPERATE LARGE-SCALE PROGRAMS.** The Center for Community Outreach is part of East Tennessee State University, a state entity that must abide by State of Tennessee rules governing employment, benefits, workplace rules, commitment to diversity, and fiscal affairs. Fiscal affairs are monitored by ETSU's Department of Internal Audit as well as by the State of Tennessee Comptroller's office. The ETSU Grant Accounting Department oversees all contract activities. ETSU manages hundreds of millions of dollars in cost-reimbursement contracts per year and has the capacity to fiscally manage the proposed project.

b. **SUCCESS IN MEETING PREVIOUS AND CURRENT FAMILIES FIRST CONTRACT GOALS.** ETSU has been very successful in meeting performance goals in our Families First program and we expect to continue meeting Families First performance goals detailed in this GFA. From 2007-2013, performance was measured by the "Work Participation Rate (WPR)". ETSU had the highest average WPR over this period, with an average WPR of 66.3% which exceeded the contract-mandated goal of 65%. In 2014 performance was again based on the WPR and again, ETSU led the State. For 2015-2017, six Families First Performance Measure Outcomes (PMOs) were developed by DHS to demonstrate a Client's success based on program requirements. ETSU met all PMOs for this period. For the contract year 2018, PMO goals were expanded from six to seven and were changed to include a Two-Generational Approach. For the second and fourth quarters of 2018, ETSU narrowly missed meeting PMO 2 having to do with quality childcare, due to extremely limited child care slots in our rural areas. In addition, PMO 4 initially was not met in the second quarter but was subsequently revised by DHS resulting in ETSU meeting this PMO. All other PMOs were met in 2018. For the first quarter of 2019, ETSU met all PMOs except for PMO 2 in District 1 only. All other PMOs were met.

### **B.1. Contact Information.**

For official correspondence regarding this proposal, please contact:

Dr. Robert G. Leger, Assistant Vice-President

Center for Community Outreach

East Tennessee State University

Box 70254

Johnson City, TN 37614

Phone: 423-439-6063

Fax: 423-439-6070

Email: [leger@etsu.edu](mailto:leger@etsu.edu)

**B.2. Form of Business.**

East Tennessee State University is a state-supported, comprehensive, regional public institution of higher learning. The physical address for the university is:

ETSU Administration  
Burgin E. Dossett Hall  
1276 Gilbreath Drive  
Johnson City, TN 37614

**B.3. Years in Business.**

East Tennessee State University has existed continuously for 108 years.

**B.4. Length of Time Performing Services.**

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) has operated Families First Core Employment Services since the inception of Families First in 1996. Length of time is 23 years.

**B.5. Number of Employees, Client Base and Office Locations.**

ETSU employs approximately 2,300 faculty and staff. Regarding Families First, the Center for Community Outreach employs 30 staff who work in the Northeast and East regions. In both regions, ETSU serves approximately 850 clients per month. See Table 1 (Appendix page 6) for a list of current office locations.

**B.6. Mergers, Acquisitions or Sales.**

No mergers, acquisitions or sales involving ETSU have occurred in the past ten years.

**B.7. Statement Regarding Felony Status.**

Neither ETSU staff nor contractors specifically associated with the Families First program have any felony convictions, guilty pleas or *nolo contendere* pleas.

**B.8. Bankruptcy Status.**

ETSU has not filed for bankruptcy or declared insolvency in the last ten years.

**B.9. Pending Litigation against the Proposer.**

The ETSU Center for Community Outreach has no pending or anticipated litigation that will affect ETSU's or the Center's performance in a contract under this Grant Funding Announcement. Please see the letter by Mr. Kelly in the Appendix, page 1.

**B.10. Pending Securities and Exchange Commission Investigations.**

ETSU does not have any pending Securities and Exchange Commission investigations.

**SECTION C – TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND APPROACH**

**Regions Applied For: Northeast, East, Southeast**

**C.1. Proposer's Understanding of the State's Requirements.**

We have carefully read the Scope of Services for this GFA and we fully understand all of the requirements in the Scope of Services. For a detailed narrative of our understanding of the Scope of services, please refer to Section C.2 where each of the requirements is discussed in detail. ETSU has been involved with Families First since its inception and we have the experience to assist DHS in meeting Federal Work Requirements for TANF recipients. ETSU has been and is totally committed to the 2Gen approach for serving Families First clients.

Additionally, ETSU understands the project schedule as presented in this GFA. The Notice of Intent to Award is due on May 21, 2019 and the grant contract is to be sent to the successful applicant on May 23, 2019. If ETSU is awarded the contract for the East, Northeast and Southeast Regions, we will ensure that the program is fully up and running before the contract start date of July 1, 2019.

**C.2. How the Respondent Will Complete the Delivery of Services, Accomplish Required Objectives, and Meet the State's Project Schedule to Begin on July 1, 2019.**

a. **PROJECT TIMELINE.** ETSU proposes the following schedule that conforms to the State's timelines for project implementation. Awarding of contract will take place on May 21, 2019. ETSU will post staff positions on May 24, 2019. Hiring will take place by June 17, 2019 with training to begin on June 18, 2019. The Families First contract will begin July 1, 2019.

b. **THE TWO-GENERATION MODEL.** The ETSU Families First program will continue to empower families in an effort to reduce both current and generational poverty employing the Two-Generation Model (2Gen). There are four central components of 2Gen:

1. **Education.** In both the Northeast and East regions, ETSU staff utilizes child care providers with a focus on Three Star, Head Start/Early Head Start providers, and the latest resource directories. Career Coaches inform participants of Head Start open house events and share helpful information to accommodate working parents. Career Coaches will promote and follow up on parent-teacher conference attendance, and encourage attendance to other school events and functions as a way to increase parental engagement. This same approach will be used in the Southeast Region.

To ensure Families First Clients have access to as many education and training options as possible, we will continue to host bi-annual education fairs to include Adult Education, Drive to 55 programs, TCAT sites in the area, and we will offer assistance in completing FAFSA and other financial aid paperwork.

2. **Workforce Development and Economic Assets.** ETSU has consistently provided up-to-date LMI and Career Pathways information to Clients to accompany results from the O\*NET® Interest Profiler during the initial intake assessment. LMI information is provided to Clients at initial assessment, posted throughout ETSU offices, and connected with Career Pathways to assist Clients in exploring entry-level, mid-level, and skilled-level positions. ETSU has been a participant in American Job Center (AJC) partner/employer quarterly meetings in each LWDA and we will continue to strengthen collaborative partnerships in each LWDA, including new partners in the Southeast Region.

Clients are kept up-to-date on monthly training opportunities offered in the AJCs. AJC monthly calendars are provided to Clients so that they can take advantage of training, workshops, and testing information. Clients will continue to be referred to financial management training offered by the AJC and also to entities who periodically provide tax preparation assistance.

For youth and young adults ages 16-22, we refer Clients to WIOA Out-of-School Youth programs. For youth and adults with disabilities, ETSU Career Coaches will work in

collaboration with Family Focused Solutions to assist eligible individuals with referrals to the Pre-Employment Transition Services through Vocational Rehabilitation.

3. Health and Wellbeing. For some Clients, we promote access to school-based health centers that can assist in obtaining health care services for their families. Additionally, ETSU has partnered with County Health Departments to relay pertinent information about available services. ETSU continues a unique partnership with Keystone Dental Care in the Northeast Region for priority status dental care for Clients. Remote Area Medical opportunities are also shared with Clients.

Family Focused Solutions Counselors have presented various topics of interest to Clients (both individually and in groups) covering information such as stress management, toxic stress, parenting skills, anger management, adverse childhood experiences information, and problem-solving skills to improve Client and family functioning. We will host at least three (3) events in each Region for our Clients during the contract period.

4. Social Capital. In collaboration with ETSU Family Resource Specialists and ETSU Family Focused Solutions, we host quarterly family engagement networking sessions (Family Fun Nights) and other opportunities (Back to School Events) for families to meet each other and network and have fun activities for children. We have connected Clients and their children to mentoring groups that provide aid with developmental issues. We will host at least three (3) events for our Clients during the contract period.

5. Monthly Face-to-Face Meetings. ETSU will relay information regarding the 2Gen Model through the initial intake assessment and completion of the Individual Opportunity Plan (IOP). After the IOP is established, monthly face-to-face meetings will help to identify any challenges within each area of the 2Gen Model and referrals will be made for barrier resolution. The State's System of Record will be updated accordingly. When circumstances occur that prohibit the face-to-face meetings, Career Coaches will make two attempts to reschedule and the State's System of Record and case file will be noted accordingly. In the event that the Client is not able to attend the scheduled face-to-face meeting, the ETSU Career Coach will conduct the meeting with the Client by telephone, covering the same discussion topics that are covered in the in-person meetings. CLRC will be noted.

c. **FAMILIES FIRST/TANF AND THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.** See Section C.7 below for a description of where ETSU has co-located with the American Job Centers. For situations where co-location is not possible, formal referral systems have been established so that Clients can seamlessly access WIOA services. ETSU is a full participant in the IFA/MOU process and costs have been established for co-location at the AJCs. We will undertake the same partnering process in the Southeast Region. ETSU understands that the State will reimburse a portion of the co-location cost based on caseload size. MOU budgets for each area are reviewed quarterly and costs are adjusted accordingly.

d. **FEDERAL AND STATE FAMILIES FIRST/TANF WORK REQUIREMENTS.** ETSU will provide case management services via the 2Gen Model to help families achieve economic stability through quality learning for the child, develop educational and employment pathways for the parent, and provide supports directly through community resources in an effort to assist the Client and his/her family to become self-sufficient. Clients will not drive more than forty (40) miles or forty-five (45) minutes from their residence in order to obtain services from ETSU. Offices will be located in or as close to the DHS office as possible or within the local One-Stop American Job Centers. Career Coaches and Regional Directors will ensure that the family as a whole is progressing through the Families First program using the 2Gen Approach.

1. Work Component Activities. Clients must be engaged in a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week in work activities. Twenty hours must be in a core area while ten hours may be in a non-core area. Attendance sheets will be requested weekly, hours will be logged into the State's ACCENT system timely, and attendance sheets will be placed in the Client's paper-based file. Failure to comply with activity requirements will be handled according to processes outlined in sections A.11, A.37 and A.38 of the Scope of Services.
2. Client Contact. Contact with the Client will be accomplished within five business days from the date of referral by letter, with an appointment date being scheduled within 10 days of the referral date. The letter will consist of the appointment date, office address, hours of operation, and telephone number.
3. Initial Engagement and Failure to Respond. If the Client fails to respond to the initial engagement letter or does not attend the initial appointment, the Career Coach will make at least two attempts via telephone and a letter to reschedule but the initial engagement process will not exceed four weeks. When necessary, a call will be made to the Client Rep for assistance and/or to collateral contacts. All attempts, including times and dates, will be documented in the State's System of Record and in the Client's paper-based file. If ETSU is unsuccessful in engaging the Client within the four week period, the Client will be referred to the State for good cause determination and possible sanction. If ETSU is successful in engaging the Client within the four week period, orientation will take place and the Client will receive all intake paperwork, including acceptance of program expectations and requirements.
4. Assessments and Individual Opportunity Plan. Client assessments will identify employment goals and interests in an effort to assist in developing short-term and long-term goals for transitioning the Client and family to self-sufficiency. The intake process will consist of the Orientation Packet; Intake Form which details Client demographics such as education level, past and present work experience, and short term and long term goals; Barrier Assessment; O\*NET Interests Profiler; and The Individual Opportunity Plan. The IOP will lay the foundation for the work activity process and is the Client's first step towards long-term employment success. The IOP will rely heavily on the expertise of the Career Coach to guide the Client into an educational program or career path that best fits his or her strengths and career ambitions while also taking into account the family's needs.
  - e. **SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS.** ETSU will discuss transportation and other support services with the Client during the assessment and IOP process or updates. All assistance will be documented in ACCENT and the Client's file within five business days of services being provided/requested. Clients will be paid transportation at a minimum of \$3 per day on a weekly basis for participating in activities. Regarding Support Services, where a need is identified the payment for said service shall be made as per the table in Section A.16 of the Scope of Services. No support will be provided for needs that are covered by TennCare, Medicare, and/or other medical insurance.
  - f. **MILESTONE INCENTIVE PAYMENTS.** ETSU will make incentive payments to Clients who meet, complete and/or achieve educational and/or employment related milestones as per the table in Section A.23 of the Scope of Services.
  - g. **CASE FILE MAINTENANCE AND DOCUMENTATION.** Career Coaches will enter data into ACCENT, maintain accurate paper-based case files, and verify documentation submitted by the Client. Periodic internal case file reviews will be conducted to ensure that no audit issues exist upon inspection by Federal or State agencies. Files shall contain all of the required documents identified in Section A.26 of the Scope of Services.



- h. **EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION AND INCOME CALCULATIONS.** Employment information will be gathered and updated timely by Career Coaches to ensure compliance with the Client's work component. A written employer statement, pay stubs, or copy of the Work Number report will be used to calculate income and hours as required by the State. ETSU will use the guidelines set forth in sections A.27, A.28, and A.29 of the Scope of Services in order to ensure that the correct documentation exists in the paper based file. ETSU will share all employment documentation with the DHS Client Representative so that modifications can take place when necessary. ETSU will utilize the methodology outlined in section A.32 of the Scope of Services for income calculation and ETSU Career Coaches will ensure that the data entered in AEIEI and AEPAS match so that secondary activity hours will be accurate.
- i. **COUNTABLE HOURS AND ATTENDANCE DOCUMENTATION.** ETSU will utilize guidelines set forth by the State in Section A.33 of the Scope of Services to ensure that Clients are progressing in their assigned work activity component and that hours, including holiday hours, excused and non-excused absences, are correctly counted. Weekly activity will be reviewed via attendance sheets, pay stubs, or other forms of employment verification. Paper based case files will be kept in a secure environment to ensure safety and to abide by HIPAA regulations. Clients who accumulate sixteen unexcused hours in a month will be conciliated per the "Client Conciliation Process" mentioned below.
- j. **WORK VERIFICATION PLAN AND PROCESS.** Upon receipt of WVP quarterly review requests, ETSU will provide the State with all documentation to show work participation hours. ETSU has always met the required deadlines and will continue to do so.
- k. **CLIENT ENGAGEMENT.** Once a Client has been assigned to a work activity, ETSU will meet in-person with the Client once per month for the purpose of assessing the Client's and family's progress according to the Individual Opportunity Plan.
- l. **CLIENT CONCILIATION PROCESS.** In the event that a Client becomes non-compliant with their work activity, a conciliation letter will be mailed in an effort to re-engage the Client for activities. In addition to a letter, two phone calls will be made, at different times during the day, over a period of five business days in an effort to reach the Client. All outreach will be noted in the State's System of Record as well as the Client file within 24 hours or less from the date of contact. If we are able to reach the Client, an appointment will be scheduled no later than 10 days out from the date of contact. If ETSU is unable to make contact with the Client during the conciliation process or the Client fails to comply within the time period allowed, the case will be referred back to the DHS Client Rep on the sixth day. A two week compliance (cure) period will be handled differently in that failure to comply will lead to the case being sent back to the Client Rep immediately so that action can be taken.
- m. **WORK INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM.** Work Incentive Payments (WIP) that are assigned to a Client whose case goes into an "over income status" will be handled per guidelines noted in section A.39 of the Scope of Services. ETSU will ensure that the Client continues to meet all criteria during the six month process.
- n. **TRAINING, CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS, AND DATA SECURITY.** ETSU will participate in all State required trainings including collaborative meetings, monthly or quarterly, as set up by State office to ensure that policies, procedures, and delivery of services are aligned with the Two-Generation approach. All ETSU Families First staff will complete the State's Computer Security Agreement immediately upon accessing the State's System of Record and each year thereafter to ensure that the integrity of the State's System of Record is kept intact.

- o. **GRANTEE'S STAFF.** Please see Section C.3 below for office locations as well as a description of the management team.
1. **Program Manager.** Ms. Amy Banks will be the Program Manager. See Section C.3 for qualifications.
  2. **Career Coach.** The Career Coach (CC) is the central caseworker for the Families First Client and his/her family. The CC will conduct the intake and IOP with the Client and thereafter will be responsible for tracking the Client's/family's progress and updating the family's goals. The CC must be highly capable of detail work and knowledgeable about the State's System of Record.
  3. **Business/Job Developer.** Job Developers must build up a network of employers who are willing to provide opportunities for people who often have limited and uneven work histories and need training/vocational education.
  4. **Family Resource Specialist.** The purpose of the FRS will be to find and link appropriate resources that will assist the Client and his/her family in overcoming barriers, addressing needs and achieving specific goals.
- p. **PERFORMANCE MEASURE OUTCOMES.** As outlined in Section A.45 of the Scope of Services, ETSU will ensure that 30% of Clients are in an education/training program, 80% of pre-school children aged one to five are engaged in high quality childcare, 30% of unemployed Clients will attain at least part-time employment, 30% of Clients enrolled in education attain a recognized credential, and 50% of clients shall retain employment during the quarter of reporting. A Performance Measure Outcomes Report will be submitted to the State on a quarterly basis by the last business day of the quarter.
- q. **PROGRAM ACTIVITY, POSTSECONDARY, BARRIERS, AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REPORTS.** Required monthly reports including the Program Activity Report, Post-Secondary, Barriers, Incentive Payments and Supportive Services Reports, will be submitted to the State by the last day of the month following the reporting month in accordance with the requirements established by the State.

In the event that ETSU should become deficient in performance in any way, a Corrective Action Plan will be submitted which describes strategies to correct and comply with the Families First contract. This report will be submitted to the State within 30 business days of receiving the deficiency notice.

**C.3. How ETSU will Manage the Project, Complete the Scope of Services, Accomplish Required Objectives, and Meet the State's Project Schedule.**

- a. **PROJECT STARTUP, MANAGEMENT TEAM AND STRATEGIES.** ETSU has an existing infrastructure already in place in the East and Northeast regions and highly experienced staff available. We have offices in 21 of the 24 counties in these Districts (see Table 1, page 6, Appendix). Upon notification of being awarded the ECMS contract for the Southeast Region, ETSU will immediately contact DHS officials and AJC operators in that region as well as the current contractor (ResCare) to coordinate the implementation of services to clients by the start date of July 1, 2019.

The Executive Director of the ETSU Center for Community Outreach, Dr. Jerry Leger, will have overall responsibility for the program. He has directed ETSU's Families First program since Families First was begun by the State. Amy L. Banks is the Program Director of Families First for ETSU and has held this position for ten years. With a Master's Degree in Business Administration from ETSU, she has worked alongside other management staff to build and

cultivate a successful Families First program. Ms. Banks will also serve as the Regional Director for the eight counties of Northeast Tennessee. Jonathan Gilbert is currently the Director of Knox County Families First Services and will continue as Director for that county. Mr. Gilbert has worked for the past 16 years as a contractor for the State of Tennessee Families First/TANF Program. Veronica Poland is currently the East Region Director of Families First Services for all counties outside of Knox County and will continue in that role. A Regional Director will be hired to oversee the ECMS for the 10 counties in the Southeast Region.

b. **STAFFING PLAN.** Our philosophy is to bring services to the Clients as opposed to asking the Clients to travel miles to access those services. Distance traveled for the Client is the determinative factor in where we establish an office. We have offices in counties that have very small caseloads but those offices make it very convenient for Clients to access Families First services. No Client will have to travel more than 40 miles or 45 minutes to access our services. Every office will have a Career Coach presence.

c. **MANAGING AND COMPLETING THE SCOPE OF SERVICES.** Families First is a highly complex program that has a myriad of Federal and State rules, regulations and policies. The management of the rules and regulations that govern the Scope of Services is handled by ETSU Directors working in conjunction with peer caseload reviewers, Data Integrity Coordinators, Dr. Leger, and by ETSU support staff located in Johnson City. The following discussion provides the methodology that ETSU uses to complete the Scope of Services.

1. **Caseload Review Process.** ETSU's caseload review process is central to ensuring that the Scope of Services is delivered in a proper and timely manner. The review process is managed by Regional Directors who are highly involved in every facet of Families First. Our Program Director works closely with the Regional Directors to ensure that policies and procedures are being followed by all staff. Periodic training sessions are held to ensure accuracy.

2. **ETSU Families First Case Management Database System (CMDS).** ETSU utilizes a proprietary, secure Internet-based case management tracking system to store, update and retrieve Client data. This data includes, but is not limited to:

- Client contact information -- general information such as address and telephone.
- Client referrals -- referral dates.
- Case closures -- closure dates and reason codes for closures.
- Criminal history -- types of offenses; probation or parole status, and court dates.
- Education -- current programs and completions.
- Employment -- current and past employment history including wage, hours of employment and fringe benefits if applicable.
- Barriers to employment -- identified barriers and solution descriptions.

Each ETSU staff person has access to CMDS via a secure, unique ID and PASSWORD for updating cases.

3. **Secure Communications.** Critical to proper case management is Client confidentiality. Confidentiality is protected by ETSU operating a completely secure e-mail system between ETSU offices and the various DHS offices in our 24 counties. The entire communication apparatus used by ETSU personnel, not only to communicate with the State, but also to communicate with other ETSU personnel, is completely secure at all data transmission points.



**C.4. Provide a Description of the Proposer's Experience at Each of the Following.**

- a. **ASSESSING AN INDIVIDUAL'S JOB COMPATIBILITY AND CONNECTING INDIVIDUALS ON CAREER PATHS.** ETSU Families First has consistently provided up-to-date LMI and Career Pathways information to Clients to accompany results from the O\*NET® Interest Profiler at initial intake assessment. This will be used when completing the IOP in order to provide participants with the best information to guide them in making optimal career decisions. LMI information is also posted throughout ETSU Families First offices, and connected with Career Pathways to assist Clients in exploring entry-level, mid-level, and skilled-level positions, complete with training requirements and wage and salary expectations. Additionally, all clients are registered with WIOA and all are referred to the American Job Centers for additional assessment. The WIOA Career Specialist then takes the assessment information and, working with the Families First Career Coach, designs the best training/education plan for the client.
- b. **FACILITATING JOB SEARCH EFFORTS FOR INDIVIDUALS THAT LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT.** All Job Search Clients will report to the Career Coach who will be located at certain times at the AJC. This will expose the Client to a variety of Job Search resources and allow the Client to become enrolled in WIOA by a Career Specialist. Clients considered to be "work ready" will be able to move directly into employment either by self-directed job search or to a job developed by an ETSU Job Developer. Clients will have one-on-one meetings with staff for assistance in identifying prospective employers, reviewing job search results, customizing job search techniques, and to plan future job search activities.
- c. **PREPARING INDIVIDUALS FOR ENTRY--RE-ENTRY INTO THE WORK PLACE.** ETSU engages Clients at assessment/intake for employment preparation, and either entry or re-entry into the workforce, by assessing current/potential barriers to employment and making appropriate referrals as needed. For Clients who are recently unemployed, the Career Coach (CC) will assist them in constructing or updating their résumé using the computer lab (every county has a computer lab equipped with résumé maker software, the O\*NET Interests Profiler, and other tutorials). The Client will meet with the CC and the résumé will be examined and discussed. The Client will then begin self-directed job search and/or will be referred to a Career Specialist at the American Job Center where they can be put in contact with employers for job interviews.

**C.5. Assessing and Providing Job Services to Individuals Who Have Limited or No Proficiency in English.**

To ensure continued availability of career services for Speakers of Other Languages who may have Limited English Proficiency (LEP), ETSU will continue to utilize the two language lines available to communicate with Clients. Initial intake/assessments, completion of Family Empowerment Plans, Monthly 2Gen updates, Barrier Checklists, referrals to other services as well as referrals to Family Focused Solutions are conducted with Speakers of Other Languages utilizing the two language lines (Linguistica and Avaza).

ETSU has ensured that all forms and written correspondence are available in Spanish and will continue to utilize the Language Line as provided by the State to offer assistance to Clients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). In addition, we will continue to partner with Goodwill Industries – Knoxville, Inc. to offer work options with other languages available in their 15 county region which covers portions of the East and Northeast regions. As a community service and work experience partner, Goodwill Industries – Knoxville, Inc., has several sites/store

locations with at least one staff person who speaks another language. These languages include: Arabic – 2 stores, Burmese – 1 store, Kirundi – 2 stores, Spanish – 2 stores, and Swahili – 2 stores.

To expand options for Speakers of Other Languages, ETSU utilizes partnerships with agencies including Knoxville International Network/KIN, Centro Hispano, and Friends of Literacy. ETSU staff work with these agencies to assist Clients with referrals to ESL/ESOL/ELL classes, assistance with literacy initiatives, social services matters such as housing and transportation, and have assisted Clients in obtaining further training through TCAT and other Community Colleges. We have also been fortunate to have the assistance of professors and students from area colleges and universities who have agreed to perform translation services for languages not available on the language line. We will endeavor to develop similar resources for Speakers of Other Languages in the Southeast Region.

**C.6. Describe the Proposer’s Approach to Career Coaching, Detailing the Types of Job Retention Services the Proposer Will Offer to Populations that Traditionally Have Had Difficulty Sustaining Employment.**

a. CAREER COACHING APPROACH. “Coaching” is defined as a process in which a learner receives support in achieving a specific personal or professional goal with training and/or guidance. ETSU understands that effective Career Coaching can have a lasting, positive impact on families and their long-term success. We are proud to have a host of extremely experienced Career Coaches (CC) who average 11 years of experience with our Families First Clients. It is because of them that we have always been able to provide the best possible experience for Clients. ETSU CC’s are prepared to “cheer” our families to success by sharing valuable information, helping them to overcome barriers, and to set and reach education and employment goals. For those who may need extra coaching support, ETSU will integrate a team-based approach for Clients and families that exhibit significant barriers in any of the four areas of the Two-Generation Approach. This Single Team/Single Plan Approach will consist of the Family Focused Solutions Counselor, Family Resource Specialist, Career Coach, and Job Developer who will work with the Client and their family to “coach” them through the process to self-sufficiency. Because of the specialized nature of each individual on this team, Clients who traditionally have difficulty sustaining employment can call upon this team for post-employment support after the job is obtained.

b. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP). A significant proportion of Families First Clients have one or more barriers to employment that may persist into the employment phase. EAP is important because it has been determined that life issues can hinder job retention and performance. Indeed, the most successful workforce agencies employ “deep”, Two-Generation supports covering family needs, mental health issues, child care, etc. EAP is designed to keep workers employed but also to meet employer business requirements for productive and reliable workers. Simply put, supported workers are more productive and reliable. Additionally, EAP is an especially significant service for small business owners, who constitute an important hiring market for our Clients, because most small businesses simply cannot afford the expense of an EAP program.

Based on their interactions with employed Clients, the Career Coach may recommend EAP assistance. The Client will be able to talk to a Family Focused Solutions (FFS) Counselor about various 2Gen issues including emotional/personal conflicts, grief and loss, anxiety and depression, marital conflicts, questions about alcohol/drug use, parenting, managing stress and

change, family blending, and work performance issues. The FFS Counselor will employ short-term, solution-focused brief therapy and will conduct problem-solving sessions. As per the 2Gen model, EAP will include referrals to existing networks of outside community-based providers including treatment centers where appropriate. EAP will not be a part of the 30 hour work requirement but will be done outside of work activity requirements.

c. **SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE WORKPLACE.** Studies have shown that one of the greatest predictors of on-the-job retention and success is social capital in the workplace. There are two important dimensions of social capital in the workplace: (a) Structural embeddedness – Who you know. This describes the quantity of relationships in the workplace; (b) Relational embeddedness – How well you know them. This describes the quality of those workplace relationships (Jacobsen, 2015). The issue becomes, how does the Client develop social capital in the workplace? We feel that there are two ways: first, Clients can be trained by Career Coaches on the need to develop expressive-affective relationships in the workplace. Working with the Family Focused Solutions Counselors, we will develop a short course in Workplace Interpersonal Dynamics—why it is important to be liked in the workplace and how to achieve being liked. The second way to develop social capital is to associate with a respected person who is already in the workplace – a mentor. It has been established in the literature that a major factor that increases Client integration into the workplace is a “buddy” or mentoring program at the work site. Encouraging employers to allow existing employees to serve as mentors for new hires helps acclimate the Client to the workplace by allowing her to seek advice on workplace norms from co-workers. In practice, for those employers such as nursing homes, that are willing to participate in a workplace mentoring program, we will encourage the employer to pair Families First Clients with a respected employee who serves as a role model and support person.

d. **RETENTION IN EDUCATION.** Because retention and continuous progress is so essential to educational success, all Career Coaches will be trained in a major retention approach – Appreciative Advisement. Appreciative Advising is the intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials. It is perhaps the best example of a fully student-centered approach to student development (<http://www.appreciativeadvising.net/>). Appreciative Advisement (AA) is an approach similar to Motivational Interviewing, a counseling technique in which all current ETSU staff have already received training. Therefore adopting the AA approach is a natural progression from the approach already employed by ETSU staff.

#### **C.7. Proposer’s Existing Relationships with American Job Centers, WoRC Operators and Other Partners that Can Connect Clients with Employment.**

ETSU operates the Families First program out of several American Job Centers (AJC) by physically maintaining a staff presence in these Centers. ETSU staff are physically located at AJCs in the following counties: Sullivan, Washington, Unicoi, Carter, Greene, Knox, Scott and Campbell. Currently, fiscal constraints prevent us from being located in the remaining AJCs; however, under the new contract, it is our intent to co-locate at all of the remaining AJCs in the Northeast and East regions. Furthermore, if ETSU is awarded the Southeast Region we will endeavor to co-locate at as many AJCs as possible in that region. For AJCs where we are not co-located, formal referral systems to WIOA services have been developed with staff at the Centers. ETSU is a full participating partner in the WIOA IFA/MOU process in the East and Northeast Regions and we will undertake that process in the Southeast Region as well.

Upon initial referral and assessment, all Families First Clients are required to register with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development JOBS4TN website, [jobs4tn.gov](http://jobs4tn.gov). All Families First Job Search Clients and those seeking training assistance will report to the American Job Center where their activities will be closely monitored by the Families First Career Coach. The Career Coach will work closely with the WIOA Career Specialist who is assigned to assist Families First Clients. The Career Specialist will, if appropriate, enroll the Client into the WIOA program, thus making the Client eligible for a variety of WIOA services.

**C.8. Describe the Proposer's Existing Relationship with Vocational Education Training Programs, Certificate Programs, Apprenticeship Programs or the Like.**

From 2015 to present, ETSU has awarded over 300 educational incentives for Clients who completed educational requirements at various institutions such as TCAT in both the Northeast and East Regions, Goodwill Industries, Walters State Community College, Virginia College, Northeast State Community College, Compassionate Care Tech Center, Tennessee Health Care Associates, Lincoln Memorial University, Pellissippi State Community College, Dental Staff School, and Sweetwater Institute of Cosmetology, to name a few. As an educational institution itself, ETSU is proud of the close partnerships that have been developed with these and other institutions and we plan to continue with these partnerships as well as to bridge gaps where needed to assist our Families First Clients in achieving their educational and employment goals. It is our intention to establish close working relationships with accredited postsecondary institutions in the Southeast Region.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are highly beneficial to those who lack adequate skills or experience. ETSU has worked closely with TCATs in both regions and Northeast State Community College in the Northeast Region to develop apprenticeship programs that work for Families First Clients. For example, the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing (RCAM), in conjunction with ETSU, has formed a partnership for specific trainings for Families First cohorts. The advantages to this are that these cohorts will work together to build a support system (increase Social Capital), move through the curricula of a specific program as one unit, and will complete the process together while sharing in their success. ETSU looks forward to this partnership and plans to replicate this in the other Regions.

**C.9. Proposer's Approach to Identifying High Demand Fields and Assisting Individuals in Aligning Skills and Training with High Demand Fields.**

a. IDENTIFYING HIGH DEMAND FIELDS. As noted in C.2 above, ETSU has provided, and will continue to provide, up-to-date LMI and Career Pathways information specific to the Client's workforce area in Tennessee. In conjunction with results from the O\*NET® Interest Profiler, the Career Coach will discuss employment options, possible career paths, and strategies for obtaining livable wage positions (\$14.79 and above) in the local area with Clients. LMI data provided by TDOLWD is available at the level of LWDA's and counties and this information is accessed by ETSU Career Coaches on a monthly basis, is distributed to Clients and posted in our offices.

b. ALIGNING SKILLS AND TRAINING WITH IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS. ETSU Families First has strong and enduring relationships with the LWDA entities in the East Region (East Tennessee Human Resource Agency) and the Northeast Region (Alliance for Business and Training). Because of this, we are in a position to ascertain the availability of high-

demand jobs and to steer our Clients into training opportunities for these professions. We will endeavor to establish this kind of relationship with the LWDA contractor in the Southeast Region. Clients are referred to the AJCs for additional counseling for high-demand occupations, support and enrollment in job training opportunities for these occupations. Our Career Coaches keep monthly calendars on scheduled AJC workshops, adult education placement testing, Job Fairs, testing dates for the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), and other career-building opportunities. Additionally, ETSU Career Coaches have in-depth knowledge of local Community Colleges, TCATs, universities and other accredited training schools. With an emphasis on obtaining and retaining employment that will ultimately lead to self-sufficiency, Career Coaches will assist Clients in achieving specific milestones that will help to move them in that direction. Our Career Coaches have helped hundreds of Families First Clients complete the FAFSA and college-specific applications, enroll in educational programs, navigate through the various challenges of courses and programs, and graduate with a certificate or diploma. Clients are strongly encouraged to enroll in certificate and degree programs for in-demand occupations that lead directly to sustainable employment with realistic possibilities for career upward mobility.

**C.10. Proactive Measures to Assist Individuals in Overcoming Barriers to Employment.**

a. **OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT.** ETSU Career Coaches have a vast reservoir of community resources they can access to help address virtually any type of problem presented by Clients.

1. **Transportation.** All compliant Clients receive paid transportation assistance. Also, ETSU prioritizes car repair and tires because having an operable and safe car is a key to employment success. We have auto repair vendors in every county that can immediately address repair issues.

2. **Mental or Physical Health Challenges.** The Barrier Assessment reveals Clients' physical health issues and those having issues will be referred to the Health Departments or urged to consult with their physicians utilizing TennCare. With respect to mental health issues, all Clients are given the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) questionnaire to discover traumatic events that have occurred to the Client. Any Client scoring a 4 or higher will be referred to Family Focused Solutions. FFS provides counseling services to help educate the Client about the impact of ACEs for both themselves and their family in an attempt to minimize the short and long-term effects of traumatic stress. Additionally, if Clients articulate or display mental issues during the course of case management, that Client will be referred to FFS.

3. **Substance Abuse.** Getting Clients to report ongoing substance abuse is difficult because they realize that reporting could result in loss of benefits. However, we have been very successful in working with Clients who admit drug problems or who are struggling to overcome addiction. Career Coaches work very closely with FFS Counselors, and Clients who admit to drug related issues are immediately referred to FFS. FFS, together with substance abuse treatment providers that are part of the FFS referral network, address the drug related issues of the client while the Career Coaches work to help the Client stay employed or to secure employment.

4. **Criminal Records.** ETSU has been aware for many years that a minority of Clients do have a criminal history, including convictions, which reduces employment opportunities. Our Regional Directors and Career Coaches have worked with AJC personnel and with various civic organizations to identify employers who are willing to hire people with criminal records.



Additionally, ETSU is proactive in that we have a continuing series of Expungement Clinics that are designed to expunge Clients' criminal records. For example, we have set up expungement clinics for the Second Judicial District (in partnership with the office of Greg Eichelman, Public Defender, set for September 11, 2019) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District (in partnership with the office of Jeff Kelly, Public Defender, set for August 16, 2019). We have also set up a continuing expungement program with Mr. Mark Stephens, the Knox County Public Defender, whereby Career Coaches can send Clients directly to his office for expungement at any time (see Appendix pages 2-4 for letters of commitment).

5. Civil Legal Barriers. Some Clients have civil legal issues that can present barriers such as landlord problems, garnishments, debt collections, etc. ETSU has been proactive in remediating these barriers through the use of Legal Clinics. For example, working with Legal Aid of East Tennessee and the Knoxville Bar Association, we have set up a Free Legal Clinic in Knoxville for September 7, 2019. (See Appendix page 5 for letter of commitment).

6. Lack of Work Experience. For Clients having no history of employment, we have established Work Experience sites in every county. These sites understand that the referred Clients have no work history and need to be mentored and trained in proper workplace behavior. Career Coaches always visit these Clients at the sites to ensure that things are going well. Additionally, the EAP Program, discussed in Section C.6.b. above, is available to support and retain the Client at her workplace. Clients are also screened for referral to Vocational Rehabilitation and these referrals are made in appropriate cases.

b. SUPPORT SERVICE REQUEST PROCESS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS. Clients can request Support Services via their Career Coach at any time during their participation. The request along with estimates and proper documentation, as described in section A.16 of the Scope of Services, will be sent to the Regional Director for examination. The Regional Director will assess the present barrier, check for an active Families First status and yearly limits, if applicable, before approving the request. Once approved, a copy of the signed request will be sent to ETSU's Fiscal Affairs staff for processing and payment, along with a copy to the Career Coach for the Client file and CLRC documentation.

C. PROCESS FOR REQUIRING AND TRACKING SUPPORT SERVICES RECEIPTS. Fiscal Affairs staff are responsible for keeping all Support Services requests, invoices for payment and payment receipts so that this information can be reported on the Support Services Report to be sent to DHS monthly.

#### **C.11. Quality Assurance and Monitoring Processes.**

a. QUALITY ASSURANCE. ETSU operates a sophisticated quality management system that is capable of detecting and correcting errors in real time and this system will be used in the new contract. Every week ETSU conducts weekly performance reviews of its case management staff. Directors or other appointed peer case reviewers examine every case on a weekly basis to ensure proper file management, ACCENT is being used properly, and program requirements are being met, and that Clients are not exceeding 16 absence hours in a month. A synopsis of the status of each case is provided to the Regional Director so that accuracy can be checked in the State's ACCENT system of records. Directors and/or case reviewers provide feedback to the Career Coach regarding cases. The CC then makes the necessary corrections or updates.

In the new contract, paper-based case files will continue to be an important piece of the day-to-day functions of the Career Coach (CC). Random requests are made for copies of attendance sheets for an internal Work Verification Plan audit. The data examined includes file

documentation requirements as set forth in section A.26 of the Scope of Services. Staff will be provided with a Case File Checklist detailing items that should be present in the file. Directors will be responsible for periodically ensuring that all documentation is present. Any findings during the paper-based case file reviews will be reported to the Vice-President of Community Outreach. If the findings are serious, a Corrective Action Plan will be requested of the CC.

b. **DATABASE SYSTEM.** ETSU utilizes a proprietary, secure Internet-based case management tracking system to store, update and retrieve Client data. This database serves as a check on ACCENT entries and has the capability of being reconciled with ACCENT to determine data entry errors.

c. **INTERNAL MONITORING PROCESSES FOR FINANCIALS INCLUDING CASE DOCUMENTATION.** All support services and case documentations are submitted by the Career Coach and go through a verification process before being provided. Transportation Assistance is provided based on attendance for the days a Client participates as shown on attendance sheets and in the State's System of Record. Support Services such as Car Repair, Dental, and Vision, which are limited per calendar year, require Regional Director Approval so that yearly limits and all required documentation (estimates, insurance, licenses, etc.) can be checked prior to processing. Other Support Services such as uniforms, licensures, and testing fees also require Regional Director approval to ensure that the support is warranted, that cases are active in the area that support is requested for, and that all support documentation exists. Incentive Payments go through a two-step process wherein the Regional Director ensures that all guidelines have been met and that paper documentation is present before submitting to the Program Director for final approval. All payments are processed by our Data Integrity and Fiscal Support Team so that State reports are accurate and that financial integrity is intact. Monthly invoice reports are handled by the Program Manager who verifies validity and works very closely with the DHS Families First Contracts Unit to ensure that billings are accurate and timely.

**C.12. Describe the Proposer's Approach to Monitoring Individuals' Participation in Core and/or Non-Core Work Activities.** ETSU understands that Clients must be engaged in a minimum of thirty hours per week in work activities. Twenty hours may be in a core area: job readiness and job search, work experience, community service, vocational education, unsubsidized employment, subsidized employment. Ten hours may be in a non-core area: adult education or job skills training directly related to employment. Attendance sheets will be requested weekly and can be provided via face-to-face office visits (preferred), via email message, fax, or text message (as last resort). Career Coaches (CC) will work with the Client to determine the best means for reporting weekly hours based on the activity and weekly schedule of the Client. CC's will monitor the activity by reconciling the attendance sheet hours with the job search documentation provided, calls to potential employers or school officials, and calls to Community Service and Work Experience site managers for progress reports. Employment activities will be monitored by pay stubs, employment verifications from employers, and/or the Work Number verification system. All monitoring efforts will be followed up by the CC with feedback to the Client to aid in successful participation. All hours will be logged into the State's ACCENT system timely, and attendance sheets will be placed in the Client's paper-based file. ETSU's Quality Assurance and Internal Monitoring Process will help to ensure that Career Coaches follow the policies and procedures set forth by the State's Work Verification Plan.